

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 059872

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/CEN:DLAZAR AND LCKILDAY:RMC

APPROVED BY ARA - WGBOWDLER

PM/MC:ASUCHINSKY

PM/MC:WROBINSON

EUR/EE:HGILMORE (SUBS.)

S/S-O: J.HOGANSON

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P 172326Z MAR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 059872

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, HO

SUBJECT: F-86 AIRCRAFT TRANSFER ;

REFS; A) TEGUCIGALPA 0954; B) SAN SALVADOR 0995

1. DECISION TO APPROVE TRANSFER OF F-86 AIRCRAFT FROM YUGOSLAVIA TO HONDURAS HAS NOW BEEN TAKEN AND WILL BE COMMUNICATED TO APPROPRIATE COMPANY OR COMPANIES ONCE USG RECEIVES OFFICIAL REQUEST FROM GOY. WE ARE NOW READY TO INFORMALLY ADVISE GOY THAT AN OFFICIAL REQUEST FOR USG CONCURRENCE IN TRANSFER WILL BE APPROVED, WHICH IS THE FIRST STEP IN IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR DECISION.

2. WE APPRECIATE FACT THAT F-86 QUESTION IS SENSITIVE ONE IN MIND OF SENIOR GOH OFFICIALS, BUT WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE NEAR-SIMULTANEOUS NOTIFICATION OF IMPENDING TRANSFER TO GOES BY BOTH USG AND GOH. FURTHER
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PAGE 02 STATE 059872

WE WOULD HOPE THAT OUR ANNOUNCEMENT TO GOH OF WILLINGNESS

TO APPROVE TRANSFER WILL REMOVE THIS AS SENSITIVE ISSUE BETWEEN USG AND GOH. SCENARIO WE HAVE IN MIND WOULD HAVE AMBASSADOR INFORM LOPEZ THAT ON RECONSIDERATION AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH LOPEZ' EXPRESSED DESIRES USG HAS DECIDED TO APPROVE AIRCRAFT TRANSFER AND IS PREPARED TO IMPLEMENT THAT DECISION. HOWEVER, WE THINK IT ESSENTIAL THAT GOH ACQUISITION OF U.S.-ORIGIN AIRCRAFT BE CARRIED OUT IN A MANNER THAT WILL AVOID POSSIBLE DESTABILIZING EFFECT ON REGIONAL MILITARY AND POLITICAL SITUATION. AMBASSADOR WOULD INFORM LOPEZ THAT SINCE USG APPROVAL NECESSARY ELEMENT IN HAF F-86 PURCHASE, IT IS INCUMBENT ON USG TO NOTIFY GOES. THUS, TO AMELIORATE NATURAL GOES CONCERN RE GOH MOTIVES, WHICH WILL BE HEIGHTENED IF GOES GIVEN ANY REASON TO BELIEVE GOH ATTEMPTING TO MAINTAIN SECRECY IN THIS TRANSACTION, WE THINK IT HIGHLY DESIRABLE FOR GOH TO INFORM GOES DIRECTLY OF ITS INTENTION TO MODERNIZE HAF THROUGH F-86 PURCHASE, AND TO ASSURE GOES THAT THIS MODERNIZATION IS UNRELATED TO CURRENT SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND NOT INTENDED AS THREAT TO ANY NEIGHBORING COUNTRY. GIVEN APPARENTLY EXCELLENT WORKING RELATIONSHIP ESTABLISHED IN RECENT MONTHS, OUR VIEW IS THAT THIS MESSAGE MIGHT BEST BE PASSED DIRECTLY FROM LOPEZ TO MOLINA, AND TO AVOID FURTHER LENGTHY DELAY IT PROBABLY SHOULD BE PASSED BY TELEPHONE. USG WOULD WITHHOLD ITS NOTIFICATION TO GOES UNTIL JUST AFTER LOPEZ' NOTIFICATION TO MOLINA. ONCE APPROPRIATE NOTIFICATION OF GOES HAS BEEN COMPLETED, WE WILL PROCEED TO IMPLEMENT DECISION TO APPROVE AIRCRAFT TRANSFER.

3. IF EMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA CONCURS, ABOVE APPROACH SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT AT EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY AND RESULTS TRANSMITTED TO DEPT. AND EMBASSY SAN SALVADOR. EMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA SHOULD ASK TO BE INFORMED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING NOTIFICATION IN ORDER THAT EMBASSY SAN SALVADOR MIGHT THEN NOTIFY GOES AS OUTLINED SAN SALVADOR 0995. IF EMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA BELIEVES THAT THERE ARE OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS OF WHICH DEPT. PRESENTLY UNAWARE AND WHICH DICTATE AGAINST FOLLOWING THIS APPROACH, PLEASE SUBMIT COMPLETE STATEMENT YOUR VIEWS ASAP. ROBINSON

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